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# Local Recovery: Five Principles for ARP Implementation

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ou've probably heard the great news: the American Rescue Plan Act became law on March 11, 2021, and with it Congress

**Y** approved unprecedented direct aid to 19,000 municipal governments through the new Local Fiscal Recovery Fund administered by the Treasury Department. After a year of advocacy, we are so pleased to see Congress recognize how critical local governments are to addressing this pandemic and the recovery process.

We expect to see guidance come out in the next 60 days, or by the beginning of May, when Coronavirus Local Fiscal Recovery Funds will be released. These funds are YOURS – you don't have to apply, every city, town, and village is entitled to a calculated amount of the \$65.1 billion set aside for municipalities (you can find ball-park grant estimates to begin planning for your community [here](#)). If your community has more than 50,000 residents, your funding will come directly from the Treasury Department; if you are in a smaller community, Treasury will fund you through your state.

So what do you need to do to prepare to receive funds? NLC's Federal Advocacy team has offered some principles to keep in mind to help guide your plan for recovery.

## **1. Assess government operations AND community needs to develop a plan for recovery.**

Gather your team and include internal and external stakeholders. Include resident voice. Get to know the community's needs at all levels: individuals, families, organizations and businesses, and each level of government. Think about building connections across systems and levels. Solicit input from valuable staff and stakeholders to help create a comprehensive needs assessment. Make racial equity a part of your plan

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The federal government has prioritized the fast distribution of funds, so do not wait to get started. The sooner that you develop a recovery plan, the faster you can get people back to work, stabilize your operations, and support those most impacted by COVID-19. As you put your plan together, consider the benchmarks of success including key metrics that will help you tell the story of how the American Rescue Plan has helped your city, town or village.



## 2. Use each revenue source strategically.

While the Local Fiscal Recovery Funds are the only pot of money going directly to every municipality, they are not the only pot of funding available. Educate yourself about [what the bill includes](#), and identify any linkages between your community needs and these specific programs. Connect with your state and county to help align funding priorities and

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understand the efforts happening to limit pre-emption and limitation by state governments.

Save Local Fiscal Recovery Funds for gaps and priorities not eligible for other federal and state assistance programs.

### **3. Prioritize fiscal stability and returning to work.**

The intent of this legislation is to shore up business and government stability, preserve jobs, and get people back to work; plan your spending with this in mind. Stay up to date on the latest guidance from Treasury about allowable uses for American Rescue Plan dollars and think about how you will tell the story of your investments meeting these goals.

### **4. Maintain records and document impact.**

Make a flexible and responsive plan for your community based on the needs and priorities you have identified. Build in feedback loops and process improvement so you can adjust your plan if it isn't meeting your goals, or if your needs change. Create long-term information infrastructure for future city leaders, and connect with your county and state to share stories. Plan for tracking and reporting from the start. Use data to tell your story, so you can show the impact of these funds in your community.

### **5. Your Congressional Delegation is part of your success.**

Make sure you let your delegation know what these funds are doing in your community! Invite Members of Congress to re-openings, ribbon-cuttings, and other events. Send them pictures of infrastructure projects, introduce them to happy residents, and share media clippings. Let them know how impactful the American Rescue Plan Act is on the ground.

While the need in our communities is great, it's important to be smart about how we spend these funds. We need to be transparent and accountable.

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dollar. Take some time to create a well-defined plan with equity at its core; when we feel time pressure, we often leave the same people behind time and again. Gather input from all your departments and your residents. Plan for record keeping and story telling. And visit NLC's [ARP Resource Page](#) for all the latest events and information, including a [weekly informational call](#) with our Federal Advocacy Team to get you the latest news.

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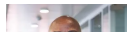
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